



THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 31, 1996

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New \$265 billion defense bill is “military pork,” says Chairman of the Libertarian Party

WASHINGTON, DC — “Military Pork” — that’s the label the Libertarian Party has slapped on the new \$265 billion defense budget authorization bill that President Clinton is expected to sign soon.

“This bill bears no relationship *whatsoever* to the actual cost of defending America,” said Steve Dasbach, Chairman of the Libertarian Party. “How can Republicans and Democrats justify spending \$265 billion on national defense when America no longer has any substantive enemies, and stands alone as the world’s only superpower?”

Dasbach cited figures from the International Institute for Strategic Studies, showing that America’s annual defense budget is:

- **\$15 billion per year more than the United States spent for defense in 1980, at the height of the Cold War** (adjusted for inflation).
- **Three times as much as any other single nation spends on defense.**
- **37% of total global military expenditures.**

By comparison, Dasbach noted:

- The six “rogue” nations of the world — Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, North Korea, and Cuba — have a combined military budget of only \$5 billion.

“In other words, the U.S. spends 53 times much money on the military as all its tiny, potential enemies *combined*,” said Dasbach.

- America’s allies — the other 15 NATO countries — spend a combined total of only \$150 billion a year on defense. And Japan spends only \$42 billion.

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"By contrast, the U.S. spends an estimated \$90 billion a year to subsidize the defense of Europe and Japan," said Dasbach.

Further, Dasbach noted, Republicans stripped out a provision from the defense bill that limited the president's ability to put American troops under U.N. control, and removed a provision requiring the president to gain Congressional approval before making troop deployments abroad.

"Thanks to the Republicans, the president can continue to send U.S. troops to Haiti, Bosnia, or any other country that strikes his fancy, and can continue to force Americans to serve under the command of the United Nations. So, this defense bill means that America will continue spending money we don't have to get involved in bloody foreign conflicts that have nothing to do with American security," said Dasbach.

The defense authorization bill passed the Republican-controlled House and Senate last week. Clinton indicated he will sign it soon.

On the subject of national defense, the Libertarian Party Platform says: "Any U.S. military policy should have the objective of providing security for the lives, liberty and property of the American people in the U.S. against the risk of attack by a foreign power. This objective should be achieved as inexpensively as possible and without undermining the liberties it is designed to protect."

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